

# Quality control key to timely orders

Hydraulics maker focuses time, effort on aerospace field.

By Alex Gary  
ROCKFORD REGISTER STAR

**MACHESNEY PARK** — When Patrick Bye was looking to buy a company two years ago, he was drawn to Energy Dynamics Inc. because of its 27-year track record. It also is in an industry — hydraulics — that has a solid future.

The company, which employs 26 workers on two shifts, is a contract machining company that makes components for hydraulics systems used in earthmoving equipment, at airports and to build bridges.

Bye, though, looked to the skies.

He decided to make components for aerospace suppliers. Even in a sagging economy, the growing need for airplanes in developing countries means the long-term growth potential for the major airplane makers — Boeing, Airbus and Bombardier — and the companies that supply them is unlimited.

And many of his potential customers, such as Hamilton Sundstrand, Woodward Governor and



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Patrick Bye, president of Energy Dynamics Inc. of Machesney Park, is focusing on lean manufacturing as he works to move his nearly 30-year-old company into the aerospace industry. The company makes components for hydraulic systems.

GE Aerospace — are major local employers.

Bye and his administrative team researched several aerospace suppliers and joined the Supplier Excellence Alliance, a nonprofit program based in Irvine, Calif., funded by aerospace heavyweights such as Lockheed Martin, Cessna Aircraft Co. and Honeywell Aerospace. The SEA's mission is to improve the supply chain performance by identifying and helping suppliers become more efficient — lean — manufacturers.

"Lean manufacturing has been our major focus since I got here," Bye said. The goal is to battle the two big evils of manufacturing — inventory and scrap.

"We focus on 'order to cash,'" Bye said. "The old system of running large batches on orders and then storing the parts

## Weathering the recession

In tough economic times, there are a number of things companies can do to cut costs or prepare for growth. Here are "Eight Ways to Weather This Difficult Economic Climate," from accounting giant RSM McGladrey:

- ◆ Improve capital management.
- ◆ Review sales and market-

ing strategies.

- ◆ Update the strategic plan.
- ◆ Improve lean manufacturing and inventory management.
- ◆ Focus on retaining key employees.
- ◆ Review health-care costs.
- ◆ Improve energy management.
- ◆ Look for tax opportunities.

in your building until the next order may seem more efficient, but you can't pay the electric bill with inventory. You can't buy new equipment with inventory."

Instead, the company focuses on building only what the customer needs, but that means turning the order around as quickly as possible. Bye said they've reduced the time of order

## Supplier Excellence Alliance

To learn more about the Supplier Excellence Alliance, visit [seaonline.org/](http://seaonline.org/).

to payment on some of its product lines from 200 days to 35.

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